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S E R M O N

Preached on Occasion of the

PRESENT REBELLION
In SCOTLAND,

AT THE

Parish-Church of *St. James, Westminster,*

AND

The CHAPELS belonging to it,
October 6, 13, 1745.

K
Secker
By THOMAS, Lord Bishop of OXFORD.

Published at the Request of the Parishioners.

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. JACKSON, and J. JOLLIFFE, in
St. James's-Street. 1745.

M O N D A Y

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ANY of you I hope remember
that I am entitled to you now

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and I will never both or shall be any

more about which the President

of different opinions

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2 SAM. X. 12.

Be of good Courage, and let us play the Men for our People, and for the Cities of our God: And the Lord do that which seemeth him good.

MANY of you, I hope, remember, that I discoursed to you upon these Words, a Year and seven Months ago *; when God, for our Sins, threatned us first, with what, for the Continuance of them, he hath at length permitted to fall on part of this Land. The Renewal, and nearer Approach, of the same Danger, requires a more earnest inculcating of the same Exhortations. For perhaps we may now lay to Heart the Things we did not then. It is very true, the Pulpit ought never to be prophaned, and I trust never hath or shall by me, to serve the Purposes of Party-Interest; or intermeddle with any Points of a Political Nature, about which the Friends of their Country, that think at all, can possibly be of different Opinions. But the present

is a common Cause, affecting every one of us, without Distinction, in what is most important to us: And God forbid, that the Ministers of the Gospel should be either unwilling or afraid to speak, when his Providence calls on them so loudly, to lift up their Voice. Should the Storm, which is now beating on many of our Fellow-Subjects, be dispersed by infinite Goodness ever so soon and so intirely, without reaching Us: It may yet be of unspeakable Use, to have made the proper Reflexions and Resolutions, whilst it was approaching towards us. And should the Almighty suffer us to feel it, as we have well deserved: Nothing, but thinking and behaving rightly under his Judgments, can give us hope of his Mercy to moderate and shorten them.

Now whatever is requisite for these Ends, is clearly comprehended in the Words of the Text: Which bring naturally to our Thoughts the three following Particulars.

I. The Interests we have at stake. *Our People and the Cities of our God.*

II. The Spirit, which we ought to shew in defending them. *Be of good Courage, and let us play the Men.*

III.

III. The humble Dependance on Heaven, which we ought to exercise at the same time. *And the Lord do that which seemeth him good.*

I. The Interests we have at stake. *Our People and the Cities of our God*: in other Words, our Civil Rights, and our Religion.

The Defence of their Persons and Possessions against lawless Power, and the secure Enjoyment of the means of Happiness here and hereafter, were the great Motives, that induced Men to submit originally to Government. And every particular Government is good or bad, as it answers or fails of answering these Purposes. Now in our own, as it stands at present: Our Liberties are greater, than those of any other Nation upon Earth: We enjoy them so fully, that we abuse them beyond Example: And, I believe, no one Person amongst us, of Knowledge and Consideration, doth or can suspect our King, of having the least Design to infringe any Branch of them. The private Property of the very meanest is as safe from the Violence and Oppression of the greatest, as good Laws and an impartial Execution of them can be

be hoped to make it. And for the Public Burthens we labour under: We have laid them on ourselves, by Representatives of our own Choice, for Uses, which we and our Fathers, very justly in the main, thought necessary: In particular for the most important Use, of securing the Nation, from time to time, against the Mischief that now once more hangs over us: which if we at last get rid of, all we have spent is well laid out; and if we submit to, all is thrown away.

Still, there may doubtless have been Faults committed, in relation both to these and other matters. But then, Part of the Faults commonly charged may be imaginary: For we are all as fallible, as those whom we blame; and few of us in so good a Situation for judging. Part may be of small consequence; and therefore no ground for any great Resentment. Part may have arisen from our own Misconduct, as much, if not more, than from that of our Superiors. Part again may have proceeded from excusable Mistakes or Infirmities of theirs; which, as we need Allowance for in ourselves, we should make Allowance for in others: Especially

pecially in Princes, for the same Reason as in Parents; and to a fit Degree, in those also that are employed by them. But whence soever apprehended Grievances may have come: We have legal, constitutional, peaceable means for redressing them; with intire Liberty to use those means, if we will. And suppose they have not operated so speedily, or so effectually, as we may wish: Yet, if Force may be used instead of them, upon every Failure or Delay, especially when caused merely by Difference of Opinions amongst our selves, no Society can ever subsist. And if we are too corrupt a People, to expect any Good from mutual Persuasion; much less can we expect it from mutual Violence.

Then lastly, as for our Religion; the least valued, I fear, yet infinitely the most valuable of all our Blessings; and which guards and fences the rest, in a manner that nothing else can: Our Religion, I say, is undeniably the most rational and worthy of God, the most humane and beneficial to Men, the furthest from being either tyrannical or burthensome, the freest from Superstition, Enthusiasm and Gloominess, of any in the World. It is
 established

established with such Care, that the Support of it is inseparable from that of the Civil Government: Yet happily with such Moderation, as to bear hard on none who dissent from it. The Practice of it indeed, we must own, hath not been enforced on its Professors, so generally or so carefully as it ought, either by the Authority or the Example of those, whose Duty it is. Would to God it had! God grant it may! But still, they who have not duly excited Men to Piety, have not restrained them from it: and every one's Disregard to it is principally chargeable on himself alone.

This I apprehend to be a true and a modest Account of our present Condition: For I have put the Advantages of it at the lowest, in order to say nothing that can be disputed. And what are we to change it for, if the Attempt now making should succeed? Indeed what have we to expect before it can succeed, (for every one must be convinced that it will not be tamely submitted to,) but a wide and horrid View, in proportion as it makes a Progress, of Blood-shed in the Field and out of it, and of Ravage at the Pleasure of a rude and uncivilized People, to the imminent Hazard
of

of every Thing, and every Person dear to us? Judgments, which this Island hath been long without experiencing: but how long, and how heavily it may groan under them now, unless a speedy Check be given to this Rebellion, God only knows. For a conquering Enemy, had he the Will, which is dreadful to trust to, hath often not the Power of restraining the Desolations of Fire and Sword, when once they are begun.

But suppose this Beginning of Sorrows over: what must follow?

With regard to our Civil Concerns. How large Numbers are there, who have no other Security for a considerable Part, it may be the most, or the whole of their Property, than the Continuance of the Government now in being; in whose Hands it actually is? And should that Government fail: as it cannot be hoped, that what hath been lent for its Support, and proved one of its main Supports, will be regarded very favourably by those who come to overturn it; how terrible may the Distresses of such Persons be, and how much farther than themselves must they extend? To all their Domesticks, all their Dependants, all that have Dealings or Concerns with them. What Multitudes are there again, whose Fortunes are intirely, or
 B principally

principally built on Royal Grants, judicial Determinations, or Acts of the Legislature, made within the last six-and-fifty Years ? which, in case of a Change, will all become questionable, as done by incompetent Authority, and lie at the Mercy of we know not whom. The Person who now threatens us, comes attended with a large and an indigent Train of Followers, collected from each of the three Nations, who will think and do their utmost to make him think, that the long Sufferings of many of them, and the present dangerous Services of many more, can never be rewarded with sufficient Bounty. And when Revenge, and Poverty, and Avarice are set on work together: what Forfeitures may be claimed, what Misdemeanors and Treasons charged, in a Nation, which will be looked on as the Whole of it involved in Treason, for so many Years past; or how unfairly the plainest Laws in our favour may be interpreted to admit of such Attempts, or even wrested to serve them; which of us all can so much as guess, or who be assured of his own Safety ?

But besides these Hazards to the Properties and the Lives of particular Persons: in what State will the Commerce and Possessions of the Nation be ? Think what innumerable Debts

Debts the Pretender to His Majesty's Crown must needs have contracted in so long a Space, during which he hath had nothing of his own to subsist on: Think what immense Sums foreign Princes may charge on account of most expensive Wars, which they may plead were entered into for his Service: and how dreadfully this Nation may be exhausted, to satisfy but a small Part of these Demands: for which it will make no Amends, to annihilate the present Incumbrances on our publick Revenues, by a ruinous Breach of the publick Faith. Think also, once more, what fatal Concessions the Powers who support the present Invasion, and who will be wanted for a continual Support, even were it to succeed; what fatal Concessions they will assuredly require in return, of Places which our Trade depends on, of Indulgences in Trade to themselves, of Restrictions upon Us; which will reduce us to a Condition impotent, precarious and despicable.

I say not this, or any thing, to raise in you a Spirit of unchristian Bitterness, either against the ignorant Wretches that have been deluded into this Rebellion, or even against their Leaders. Let them be judged of with all the Charity, let them be treated with all the Mer-

cy, their Case will possibly allow: only let us see the Mischief their Success would bring on us, and exert ourselves accordingly to prevent it.

But were we ever so safe, in other respects: what Security can we have with respect to our happy, envied, legal Constitution? when that Power of suspending and dispensing with Laws, and levying Money without Law, which lays every Provision that can be made in favour of the Subject entirely at the Sovereign's Feet; and yet was not only claimed, but exercised immediately before the Revolution, shall come of course to be established as a just Prerogative, by what will be called a Restoration. The Rights we have enjoyed, as indisputably our own, from that time to this, may then be accounted seditious and treasonable Pretences; and every Expression of Fondness for any Remain of Liberty, be deemed a Step towards Rebellion: as indeed it will be thought but natural, to suspect and stifle the least breathing of that Spirit which once delivered us, in order to prevent another Change. Efforts notwithstanding will, in all likelihood, be made towards one: how bloody and how fatal, who can tell? The Apprehension of these Efforts will be a much stronger

stronger Plea, than in the late King *James's* Time, for keeping up a chargeable and dangerous standing Force, perhaps a foreign one. The Dread of that Force will intimidate some; and the Principle, of turning to their own Advantage what they cannot help, will intice others, to go every Length of Compliance that they are required. And a Prince coming in on the Bottom of Right Hereditary and Indefeasible, will think he hath the clearest Title to Absolute Power. His Partizans, even whilst he is out of Possession, have openly avowed he hath: and what can be expected then, if he should get into it? The mere Exercise of such a Power very probably will not satisfy: but Declarations and Oaths be invented for the Acknowledgment and Support of it; which, it will be impossible for us, either to make with Innocence, or to refuse with Safety.

Then for the State of our Religion: No one Instance can be given, that Popery ever spared Protestantism for any Continuance, after it was able safely to oppress it. But least of all will Favour be shewn here, longer than Necessity obliges. For, whatever Tenderness many of that Communion may be inclined to; as, no doubt, there are Numbers amongst them

them of mild and worthy Persons: yet the uncharitable Part will assuredly prevail, as they always have done every where; and falsely imputing to our Religion that pretended Disloyalty, which proceeded only from their illegal Attempts to overturn the whole Constitution, will not fail to argue, that the same Cause must produce again the same Effect, and therefore must not be permitted to subsist. Think then, all that love the Church of *England*, all that believe the Doctrines of the Reformation to be the Truth of Christ, what a Condition it will be, either to profess and practise the Falsehoods and Impieties you are so thoroughly convinced of, or to be driven from this, and every other Place of God's publick Worship into Corners: nay in a while to be dragged out thence also, and sacrificed to that *Mother of Abominations*, which hath so long been *drunken with the Blood of the Saints*. Rev. 17. 5, 6.

And let even them who are indifferent, or Doubters, or Unbelievers in Religion, reflect on this at least: that, as they are always inveighing against Superstition, so the Church of *Rome* is over-run with it to the highest Degree possible: and, as they are always exclaiming

exclaiming against the Wealth and Power of Ecclesiasticks; so the Wealth and the Power, the Pride and the Tyranny of Popery, are unspeakably the greatest that ever the World knew. And if they will notwithstanding go at present upon their favourite Maxim, that All Religions are the same, it will be a just Judgment of God to make them feel the Difference.

But to these Things it may be answered, that the most solemn Obligations have unquestionably been entered into, by Him who claims the Crown, for our intire Security, both in Church and State. Nor indeed could any thing seem in Speculation more likely: because nothing is more apparently requisite in all common Policy. And yet, surprising as it is, no one clear and explicit Declaration of this kind was made by the Pretender at the time of the last Rebellion: nor can I hear of any made by him at present. And I beg you to consider: if he will not promise plainly now; what will he do afterwards? For as to any good Words, given by another in his Name: what can be easier for him than to disavow them, as going beyond the Commission he granted? But suppose the strongest Assurances given by himself: were they not given by

by the bloody Queen *Mary* to her Protestant Subjects, who had fully merited them by their Zeal for raising her to the Throne? and yet did she not persecute them immediately, and burn them in little more than a Twelve-month? Were they not given by the late King *James*? And had he not strong Motives of Gratitude, as well as Conscience, to keep them? And yet did he keep them for the smallest Part of four Years? How can we then flatter ourselves, that any one who claims under him, will be at all more favourable to that Religion, and those Liberties, which have been all this time the capital Enemies to his Pretensions? The most formal Declarations he can make, have been over and over, and long since the Revolution, declared by the Authority of the See of *Rome* “utterly null and void, whenever they are
 “prejudicial in any manner” (I use the very Words of *Pope Clement XI.* in the very Case of Stipulations made in favour of Protestants)
 “to the Catholick Faith, the Salvation
 “of Souls, or to any Rights of the Church
 “whatsoever; even though such Engage-
 “ments have been often ratified, and
 “confirmed by Oath.” * Let therefore the Pretender

* Clem. XI. Pont. Max. Epist. & Brevia. fol. Romæ, 1724. tom. 2. p. 179.

Pretender to the Crown make Promises ever so full and expressive, let his natural Dispositions to keep them be ever so favourable: yet as he professes Subjection of Conscience to the Pope's Determinations, under whose Eye he hath long resided, in whose Dominions his Son, who hath now invaded us, was born and educated, and by whose Bounty they have both been all along supported; he cannot refuse to break any Ties which shall be declared sinful by his infallible Guide; who may purposely have connived at his entering into them, in order to his breaking them at a proper Time. But if he were to refuse it: can we imagine that all his Successors too will be so obstinately undutiful, as to spare a Religion which they mortally hate, when they believe extirpating it will intitle them to Heaven, and atone for all the Sins of a wicked Life?

It must be acknowledged, Popery hath appeared milder of late, than in former Ages. Yet even our Days have known the Executions of *Thorn*, and the Banishments of *Saltzburgh*: and *France*, this very Year, hath been persecuting and

murdering our Protestant Brethren for the Profession of their Faith. Nor hath the Church of *Rome* ever given up any one of the Claims, which it may have forborn to exercise : and, should it once regain so much of its ancient Power, as would necessarily follow from prevailing here, it would soon resume its ancient Fierceness in Proportion.

Shall we persuade ourselves then, that Fear will restrain a Popish Prince from attempting to overturn our Religion and Laws? But what if his greatest Fear should be that of Damnation for not attempting it? which was the known Case of King *James*, and may be that of others after him. Or what if it should be held the safest Way, in a political View, to make thorough Work at once, by the Assistance of Foreigners, now preparing to invade us?

Still it may be said, that whoever becomes our King, will at least, for his own Interest, be careful of the Trade and Power of the Nation. But how can he, if he would ; when he must undoubtedly have promised the contrary to foreign Powers already? And if he is capable of deceiving Them, how shall We trust him?

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But supposing he hath promised them nothing: yet if he prevails by their Help, what can he be else, than a Deputy and a Viceroy, subject to the Commands of our most formidable Adversaries?

This Consideration ought in Reason to alarm even those who wish well to his Cause, even those who profess his Religion; and make them utter Enemies to his coming in such a Manner, however desirous they may be of his coming otherwise. For can we, or can they, make Terms with the Power of *France*, when we have once given it Footing in the Heart of our Country; or hope that any Terms, which are made, will ever be observed? Will that most ambitious and perfidious Crown lose such an Opportunity, of weakening us by our own Strength, making us dependent on itself for ever, and Tools to enslave the rest of *Europe*? Will it not treat both us, and the King it sets over us, as the Tyrant of *Babylon* did the Prince whom he gave to the *Jews*? *He hath made a Covenant with him, and taken an Oath of him; he hath taken also the Mighty of the Land; that the Kingdom might be base, that it might not*

lift up itself; but that by the keeping of his Covenant it might stand. Ezek. xvii.

13, 14.

Such then being the View of our Dangers, let us proceed to consider

II. The Spirit, with which we ought to defend ourselves against them. *Let us be of good Courage, and play the Men.* These Words may seem to express the Duty of the Soldiery alone. And without question, they express that peculiarly: and joined with the following ones, clearly shew that a strong Sense of Religion, and a virtuous Concern for the common Welfare, are the true Principles, that will give military Persons Bravery and Success; as they did to those, whose History the Text relates. But still the more Literal Translation is, *Be strong, and let us strengthen one another.* In this Sense they concern us all: this therefore I shall follow.

And if ever Cause required exerting all the Strength, and all the Courage we have, this is that Cause. For the Attack is made by our Enemies, foreign and domestick at once, on every thing dear to us, Civil and Sacred: and Conscience

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towards God, as well as private Interest and publick Good, demands our utmost Zeal in such a Contest.

The Plea, which some would use to check this Ardour, as if the Government we live under, ought not to be supported, because the late King *James* and his Son were set aside by the People, is absolutely groundless. For indeed, King *James* set himself aside ; abandoned the Government wilfully, rather than administer it according to Law : and by so doing, left the Nation both at Liberty, and under Necessity, to provide for itself in the Manner it did ; especially as he carried away the Person, whom he called his Son, along with him. And had he not been carried away ; all the World knows it was generally and strongly suspected that he was not the Queen's Child : and the three Estates of the Kingdom, the only fit Judges of a doubtful Succession, fixed it without taking Notice of him. But had none of these Things been so : that unhappy King, seduced by *Romish* Bigots, had invaded, with a high Hand, the Religious and Civil Rights of his People : instead of giving the least Hope of Amend-

Amendment; he was going on with Rapidity to the utter Destruction of both. And Subjects were not made for Princes, to be treated as their absolute Property, and descend from one to another like Cattle, let them be used as they will : But Princes were made for their Subjects; to govern them legally, and seek their Good. What is the Duty of the one, is the Right of the other : and where there is a Right, there ought to be a Remedy. Common Remedies are ever to be used in common Cases: and if they are insufficient, single Persons ought to bear every thing, and Nations every thing that can be born without Destruction ; rather than break the publick Peace, and established Order of Government. But in extreme, imminent, universal Dangers, Methods of the last Resort, if necessary and likely to succeed, are fully warranted ; by the Nature of the Thing, by our original Constitution, by ancient Practice upon it, and royal Recognitions of it.

The Scripture indeed commands, what Reason itself doth, Subjection to the supreme Powers.—But how many other Com-

Commands are there, which confessedly admit of proper Exceptions? And were this to admit of none, yet the Scripture doth not determine in whose Hands the supreme Power is lodged. And where it is divided, as it is with Us, between the King and his great Council, by whose joint Authority every Statute is expressed to be made: He who refuses to stand to that Division, as the late King *James* did openly, both by Word and Deed, renounces the Authority that belonged to him under it; and other Authority he hath none. Or suppose even this doubtful: the Scripture requires Subjection: But to whom? To *the Powers that be*, the actual, visible, Governments of every Country. 'These it declares *are ordained of God*; and that *they who resist, shall receive Damnation*. Rom. xiii. 1, 2. Not the least Hint given, of enquiring into the Justice of an Establishment in its first Rise long ago: a Thing which few Subjects can do, and perhaps few Governments can bear. Not the slightest Intimation, of adhering for ever to the Family of an abdicated Prince; and going on Age after Age, to ascribe the sovereignty

vereign Authority over a Nation, to a Person, that hath no Means of exercising any one Act of Authority. The Necessities of Mankind render it absurd: the Practice and the Notions of Mankind have always been contrary to it. Heathens, *Jews*, Christians, Papists, Protestants, all the World have agreed in the Point with universal Consent; excepting a small Handful of Men in this one Age and Nation: Persons greatly to be pitied, and highly to be esteemed, while they submit peaceably to Inconveniences for Conscience Sake; but surely guilty of as indefensible a Singularity, as ever was.

There may indeed often be a Doubt, and sometimes it may last a good while, which are *the Powers that be*: whether a Government is yet to be considered as established, or not. But in our own Case, if a Duration of so many Years, and the peaceable Succession of so many Princes, and the repeated Acknowledgments of the whole People of these Kingdoms, and of all the Sovereigns and Nations of the Earth, do not make it a clear Point, in whose Hands the supreme Authority of this Country long hath been,

been, and actually now is : nothing of such a Nature can ever be clear at all. Very few of Us have either known, or lived under any other Government : we have all of us claimed, and enjoyed the Protection of this : we have acted in Pursuance of its Authority ; we have pray'd continually for its Preservation ; we have many of us bound our Souls by solemn Oaths, and some of us by repeated ones, to maintain it : In so doing, we maintain at the same time, every thing that is valuable to us and our Posterity : and there cannot be a firmer Tye upon us, than these Things together ; nor more abandon'd Wickedness, than to break through it.

Strengthened thus then within ourselves, let us proceed to *strengthen one another*. God knows, instead of this, we have taken great Pains to weaken one another, by separate Interests and Views, Animosities and Resentments, unkind Suspicions, and unjust Imputations. What Party or Sort of Men hath been most to blame in this Respect, were it ever so easy to say, would be very unfit : when the plain Concern is, not to accuse and re-criminate, but all to unite in what affects

all so nearly. They therefore, who have hitherto thought the Danger of such an Attempt small; let them now shew they were far from wishing it greater. They who have been dissatisfied with particular Measures of Government; let them now give Proof, that they were not disaffected to the Government itself: and if possibly in any thing they may have opposed too far, take this fittest Opportunity of making amends. This will demonstrate the Uprightness of their Intentions, give Weight to their Sentiments on other Matters, and pull down the false Hopes our Enemies have founded on our domestick Disputes. But then at the same Time, if the Zeal of any for the present Establishment, hath tempted them to judge too hardly concerning the Affection of others towards it; they ought now candidly to acknowledge their Error: embrace those as true Friends, who approve themselves to be such in the Day of Trial; and remember for the future, that Strength is attained, not by Division, but by Union. Indeed we should all remember, instead of aggravating what our Opposers have done amiss,

mils, to reflect seriously what we and our Friends have been faulty in : and perhaps we should most of us find, it hath been a great deal too much.

But it is not mutual good Temper alone, that our Case requires ; but mutual Assistance and Encouragement, to be given with Spirit by each of us, according to his Ability and the Nature of his Station, to all around him : by ranking ourselves openly on the Side we are of ; joining our Counsels, contributing our Money, hazarding our Persons, if need require it ; by instructing, undeceiving, exciting, fortifying, as many others as we can. That part would be indifferent, part timorous, and all resist weakly ; was the great Thing, that the Adversaries of the Government promised themselves, and it's Friends were apprehensive of. God be thanked, both of them in some Degree have seen their Mistake. Let us go on to complete the Conviction, by a daily increase of resolute Activity. *Strengthen ye the weak Hands, and confirm the feeble Knees : Say to them that are of a fearful Heart, Be strong, fear not.* Isaiah xxxv. 3, 4.

One Thing more, to be mentioned under this Head, is, that if the present Endeavour to ruin us should increase, tho' it were considerably, the publick Expence necessary to defend us ; we are surely neither to wonder, nor to murmur at it ; but bear with Chearfulness what may be inconvenient, in order to prevent what must be ruinous ; and consider well, that were this Design to take Place, we should probably pay much more to Foreigners, as a Reward for enslaving us, than now to our own Governors, as the Means of keeping us free.

But human Means alone, human Prudence and Strength, be it ever so great, is no sufficient Ground of Confidence. For *the Most High ruleth in the Kingdom of Men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will ; Dan. iv. 17.* We must never forget therefore,

III. An humble Dependence on Heaven for the Event of all : *And the Lord do that which seemeth him good.*

What it will seem good to him to do with Us, when we consider our National Wickedness and Ingratitude to him, it must be acknowledged we have great Cause to
fear.

fear. He hath blessed these Nations beyond most, if not any other part of the World: and we have turned all his Blessings into Occasions of Sin. He hath given us Wealth: and we have applied it to the wicked Purposes of Dissoluteness and Luxury. He hath given us Liberty: and we have abused it to the bitterest Hatred, and the grossest Licentiousness. He hath given us true Religion: and we have slighted and scorned it; cast off the Worship of God, received the Mercies of his Providence without Thankfulness, and the Threatnings of it without Humility; nay ridiculed the Obligations even of Probity and moral Virtue, till we have scarce Principle enough left to be concerned for any thing, but present Pleasure and present Interest. Our Abhorrence of Popery is gone: our Zeal against Slavery is degenerated into Faction: our Zeal for the Government, into private Selfishness. We daily accuse one another of these Things: we never think of reforming ourselves. And what can be, in a rational View, the probable Consequence, in a religious one the just Punishment, of such Behaviour; but that which the Divine Wisdom hath so clearly foretold? *For that they bated Knowledge,*

ledge, and did not chuse the Fear of the Lord; they would none of my Counsel, and despised my Reproof: therefore shall they eat of the Fruit of their own Way, and be filled with their own Devices. Prov. i. 29, 30, 31.

It is by slow and silent, but it is by effectual Methods, that God shews himself the Governor of the World. Princes that neglect to support His Authority, shall find their own decay with it. Subordinate Rulers, that trust to other than virtuous Arts of Government, shall find they have leaned on a broken Reed. And Nations, that indulge Profaneness and Profligateness, shall experience them to bring on Confusion and Ruin. Escaping it in one Shape for once, is nothing: in that, or some other, it must fall upon them, if they continue such as they are. And were ever so great Ruin to fall upon Us now, what would it be more, than Samuel's Prediction verified? *If ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your King. 1. Sam. xii. 25.* And what could we say, but acknowledge before God, with the penitent Jews in *Nehemiah*, *Thou art just in all that is brought upon us; for thou hast done right,*

right, but we have done wickedly: neither have our Kings, our Princes, our Priests, nor our Fathers (would to God, there were not the most Cause of all to add, nor we ourselves) kept thy Law. Neh. ix. 33, 34.

Considering our Case in this Light then, we have small Reason to *be of good Courage*. And yet, considering the divine Mercies, we are far from having any Reason to despond, if we have any Heart to repent. The Cause we are engaged in, is that of Right and Truth, and God's own Honour. Defending it valiantly, is performing one Part of our Duty to him: and deserting it, would be filling up at once the Measure of our Iniquities to the utmost. Wicked as we have been and are, yet if we will but, *at least in this our Day, know the Things that belong to our Peace*, Luke xix. 42. there is still abundant Room to trust in the gracious Protection we have so often experienced: and provided we can but now bring our Hearts in earnest to fear God, we have no need to fear Man. What hath hitherto happened, is indeed more than enough to awaken us from that Supineness, which it is astonishing we shou'd have been

been in so long; but not at all to make us doubtful concerning the Event, were there only any Prospect, that we should render ourselves fit Objects of our Maker's Favour. For the Sake of a few good, there may be Mercy in store for the rest. The more of us become so, the greater is the Hope. And would but this National Alarm produce, what undoubtedly Heaven hath designed it for, a National Reformation; we might boldly say to our Enemies, in the Words of holy Writ: *Associate yourselves, O ye People, and ye shall be broken in Pieces: take Counsel together, and it shall come to nought: speak the Word, and it shall not stand: for God is with us. Sanctify therefore the Lord of Hosts, and let him be your Fear, and let him be your Dread, and he shall be for a Sanctuary.* Is. viii. 9, 10, 13, 14. *For God will save Sion, and will build the Cities of Judah. The Posterity also of his Saints shall inherit it; and they that love his Name shall dwell therein.* Ps. lxxix. 35, 36. *Their Children shall continue, and their Seed be established before him.* Ps. cii. 8.

F I N I S.